



Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

Supervisor Gerry Broderick, District 3

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SUPERVISOR GERRY BRODERICK SAYS PROPOSED SALES TAX SHOULD BE USED FOR PARKS AND TRANSIT

Says Gary Grunau's Proposal for a .5% Sales Tax for Arena and Streetcar Ignores 2008 Referendum

Milwaukee County Supervisor Gerry Broderick said today that a proposal by Milwaukee developer Gary Grunau to levy a .5 sales tax for a new downtown arena and other items did not take into consideration a 2008 referendum approving a sales tax for transit and parks.

Grunau has publicly proposed the sales tax for a downtown arena, a streetcar system, the Milwaukee County Zoo, the Milwaukee Public Museum and the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts. But Broderick said that in 2008 voters approved a referendum creating such a sales tax for transit and parks.

"Gary Grunau's well-intended suggestion of levying a sales tax for a basketball arena as well as streetcar development and other projects seems to treat lightly the fact that the public has already stated their preference for how to use the proceeds of any new sales tax revenue," Broderick said. "But he apparently doesn't understand that way back in 2008 the voters passed an advisory referendum approving a half-cent sales tax for parks and a half-cent for transit.

"The referendum results were met by the state Legislature with a wall of silence, indicating a likelihood that meant our other – unelected – government didn't agree. I'm of course referring to the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, the Greater Milwaukee Committee and other local oligarchs.

"And while I concede that I'm one of those stubborn holdouts who still believes in taxpayers deciding how their money will be spent, it still seems to me that when the public speaks through the ballot box, the results should not be ignored so easily."

Broderick urged the Legislature to allow Milwaukee County to levy the sales tax for parks and transit as voters approved six years ago.

"Perhaps now that a real discussion is taking place over Milwaukee County's needs, we can go back to what the public has already approved – funding for parks and transit," Broderick said. "Then we can allow the oligarchs to come up with the funding for a new arena themselves."

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